

# Gallery of Distinguished Civilian Employees



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Rock Island District

## *James H. Blanchar*



James H. Blanchar began his career with the United States Army, Corps of Engineers in 1959. Mr. Blanchar served in various positions in the construction field throughout the Corps of Engineers. Mr. Blanchar came to the Rock Island District in 1982 as Chief of the Construction Division. While in the Construction division in Rock Island he was instrumental in many improvements in the division to include an automated payment/progress report and construction management reporting system, and an improved pre-award review process. In 1986, Mr. Blanchar served as Deputy District Engineer for a period of eight months, and then in 1987 he was selected as the Chief of Operations Division where he served until his retirement in 2002. During his tenure as Chief of the Operations Division, Mr. Blanchar served on many local and national groups and committees working to improve the Operations and Maintenance processes throughout the Corps of Engineers. Mr. Blanchar's leadership was instrumental in testing and implementing performance and customer satisfaction metrics know as the Performance Metrics System. Mr. Blanchar was also appointed by the Assistant Secretary of the Army

(Civil Works) to serve as the United States representative on the Permanent International Association of Navigation Congresses' Technical Committee on Navigation. Throughout his career Blanchar's willingness to do whatever it took earned the respect of his peers and leadership and brought great credit upon himself and the United States Army, Corps of Engineers.

## *Gary W. Thompson*

Gary W. Thompson served as Park Manager, Coralville Lake, Rock Island District, from 1976 until his retirement in 1991. During this period, Thompson was instrumental in the development of the recreation mission for the Rock Island District and presided over a remarkable growth in visitation at Coralville Lake. Thompson's efforts increased recreational opportunities available to eastern Iowa residents, while improving the quality of the recreational experience for project visitors. Thompson was also involved in development of a professional ranger staff for both his project and the district by filling 0025 series Park Ranger positions while gradually phasing out the 0026 park technician non-professional series. Thompson made a significant contribution to the development of recreation within the District and helped to establish the District as a leader in recreation for the Corps of Engineers. As one of the founders of the recreation program for the District, no one is more deserving of honor and induction into the Gallery of Distinguished Civilian Employees.

